

**VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT  
PROGRAM, DIVISION OF  
DEVELOPEMNTAL DISABILITIES,  
DSHS**

Full Report 01-4, click here  
**BRIEFING REPORT 01-4**

**REPORT DIGEST**

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# **VOLUNTARY PLACEMENT PROGRAM DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES DSHS**

## **SUMMARY**

This JLARC briefing report responds to legislative concerns about the rapidly rising expenditures of the Voluntary Placement Program (VPP), administered by the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Costs for VPP were \$12 million for FY 1999, increased to \$22 million for FY 2000, were forecast to grow to \$29 million for FY 2001, and are anticipated to exceed \$30 million in FY 2002 and \$40 million in 2003.

Overall, we conclude:

1. The Voluntary Placement Program within the Division of Developmental Disabilities is significantly different from the process formerly administered by the Children's Administration (CA) prior to July 1998. The differences include both eligibility requirements and levels of services authorized and provided.
2. Young adults, ages 18-21, make up one-third of the current Voluntary Placement caseload. Services for this age group comprise about one-half of total monthly expenditures. This focus was not expected, given that the statute (RCW 74.13.020) defines "child" as a person less than 18 years of age.
3. The Division has not promulgated administrative rules in the Washington Administrative Codes (WACs) for the Voluntary Placement Program. No written uniform criteria are used consistently across the program for determining client eligibility, levels of services, and levels of reimbursements for services rendered. As a result, program officials cannot assure that effective cost control measures are in place.

We have concluded that, together, these three issues contribute to the rapid rise in expenditures for the Voluntary Placement Program.